

7 FAM 580 OTHER AGENCY SERVICES

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Consular officers are asked to assist several other agencies requiring a limited amount of help.

7 FAM 581 ARMED SERVICES

7 FAM 581.1 Introduction

The Department of Defense provides armed forces abroad who are needed to protect the security of the United States and to deter war. The Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force are the major elements of these forces, numbering about 475,000. They are supported by about 1 million civilian employees of the Department of Defense and about 2.5 million members of the reserve components. Most requests from the armed services for consular assistance relate to retirees from the U.S. armed forces who are abroad. For requests that relate to armed forces retirees in the United States, see section 7 FAM 520 , on the Veterans Administration.

7 FAM 581.2 Authority

Numerous laws cover benefits for armed forces veterans, surviving dependents, and parents. Title 10 of the U.S. Code codifies the various laws relating to the U.S. armed forces and retirement.

7 FAM 581.3 Definitions

In addition to definitions cited in section 7 FAM 503 , the following definitions pertain to assistance for U.S. armed forces retirees:

- a. "Armed forces" means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.
- b. "Armed forces retiree" means a member of the armed forces who has officially terminated active duty.
- c. "Dependent" means one who depends on another person for financial support.

7 FAM 581.4 Delivery of Annuity Checks

Military retirement checks are prepared by the individual branches of the armed forces and are mailed directly to the retirees, rather than routed through Foreign Service posts.

7 FAM 581.5 Medical Services for Armed Forces Retirees

Persons who are retired from the armed forces and who inquire about medical service at a U.S. military hospital abroad for themselves or one of their dependents should be instructed to address their requests for such service to the local commander of the nearest such hospital or of the military hospital at which they would like to receive treatment. They should identify themselves, preferably by reference to Department of Defense documentation issued to individuals for that purpose, and be guided by instructions provided by the hospital. The post is not authorized to expend funds for any purpose concerning a matter of this nature.

7 FAM 581.6 Inability to Perform a Service

a. When a request for assistance from the armed forces cannot be performed expeditiously, or material sent for that purpose cannot be delivered, the consular officer reports by transmittal slip or memorandum, as appropriate, to the branch of the service from which the material or request was received. The report states the circumstances that prevent prompt action, when it is expected that it will be possible to comply with the request, or why the material is undeliverable. The report is placed in an envelope, with undeliverable material enclosed, which is sealed and addressed to the branch of the service that requested the assistance, or from which the material was received. The sealed envelope is then returned with the official mail of the post. No mention is made of the Department of State or any of its bureaus or posts abroad on the envelope, and no copy of the report is sent to the Department.

b. Any other situations relating to a service for the Department of Defense on which the post requires specific guidance may be reported in a memorandum to the Department (CA/OCS/CCS), Subject: Federal Agencies (specify which branch of the Service).

7 FAM 581.7 The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS)

7 FAM 581.7-1 What CHAMPUS Is

The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) helps to pay for civilian medical care provided to spouses and children of active duty Federal uniformed services personnel, to retired Federal uniformed services personnel, their spouses and children, and to spouses and children of deceased active duty and retired Federal uniformed services personnel. Although it is not a health insurance program, CHAMPUS in many respects is similar to the commercial health insurance provided by private employers. CHAMPUS has a deductible, co-pay, and a specified list of covered and noncovered services, but the program does not involve any premium payment. Persons who have a valid military ID card showing that they fit into one of the eligible categories mentioned in the first sentence of this paragraph may submit bills to the CHAMPUS fiscal intermediary (an organization under contract to the Government to pay CHAMPUS claims) that processes claims for the state or country in which the medical care was received.

7 FAM 581.7-2 Additional Sources of Information Outside Continental United States

Because CHAMPUS is a complex program, it is recommended that persons who plan to use it seek additional information from:

(1) A Health Benefits Advisor (HBA) at a military medical facility. Applicants may call the office of the commanding officer for the name and number of the nearest HBA.

(2) The office of the Defense Attache at the Embassy, if there is no military medical facility nearby. This office may be able to provide some guidance on benefits and limitations.

(3) Any of the offices listed in subsection 7 FAM 581.7-3, to which bills are submitted.

7 FAM 581.7-3 How to Submit Bills

All bills submitted should include a correct return (home) mailing address that will be good for at least 3 months and should be on the forms specified below:

(1) For bills from all providers of medical services except hospitals: CHAMPUS form 500, and

(2) For hospital bills: form DA 1863-1.

Forms can be obtained from many Embassies, military medical facilities, or any of the offices listed in subsection 7 FAM 581.7-4.

7 FAM 581.7-4 Where to Submit Bills

Bills for medical services may be submitted as follows:

(1) Bills from Africa, Europe, or the Middle East (including those for dental claims) should be sent to:

OCHAMPUS Europe
APO New York 09102

Telephone:

Commercial: 06221-32297
Military: 2122-575/633
Autovon: 370-1110, Ext. 575/633

(2) Adjunctive dental claims worldwide (except for areas covered by OCHAMPUS Europe) should be sent to:

Blue Shield of California

CHAMPUS
P.O. Box 85035
San Diego, CA 92138

Telephone:

Commercial: (619) 297-7600

(3) Bills from Puerto Rico, Bermuda, Canada, Central and South America, Mexico, and the West Indies should be sent to:

Blue Shield of California

CHAMPUS
P.O. Box 3708 (or Box 3704, for
Puerto Rico only)
Escondido, CA 92025

Telephone:

Commercial: (619) 480-2888

(4) Bills from the Pacific area, including the Republic of China, Korea, and Thailand should be sent to:

Hawaii Medical Service Association

CHAMPUS
P.O. Box 860
Honolulu, HI 96808

Telephone:

Commercial: (808) 944-2110.

7 FAM 582 OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM)

7 FAM 582.1 Introduction

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) administers a merit system for Federal employment, providing a wide range of personnel services to both applicants and employees. OPM services are extended to citizens abroad through consular officers worldwide. These services involve primarily the Civil Service retirement system, which is based on a contributory retirement plan. Employees and the Government each contribute to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, from which benefits are paid. Employees are guaranteed a return of an amount that is at least equal to their contributions. This return may be in the form of annuity payments or as a lump-sum refund to the employee or the employee's survivors.

7 FAM 582.2 Authority

In 1978 the Office of Personnel Management was created as an independent establishment by Reorganization Plan No. 2, which was implemented pursuant to Executive Order 12107 of December 28, 1978 (effective as of January 1, 1979). Many of the functions of the former U.S. Civil Service Commission were transferred to OPM. Its duties and authority are specified in the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (92 Stat. 1121, 5 U.S.C. 1101), approved on October 13, 1978. Under the Civil Service retirement law, as amended (see 5 U.S.C. Chapter 83), the Civil Service Retirement System automatically covers most employees, except those specifically excluded by law or by OPM regulations.

7 FAM 582.3 Definitions

The following terms are commonly used in Civil Service retirement benefits work (see also section 7 FAM 503):

a. "Annuitant" means a person (including a former participant in the established retirement system, or a survivor of such person, or other person designated to receive an annuity), who meets all requirements for receiving an annuity under the system.

b. "Annuity" means an amount payable annually or at other regular intervals, either for a certain or uncertain period; in legal and financial matters the term generally means a "life" annuity (that is, an amount payable at intervals for the remainder of the annuitant's life).

c. "Examinee" means a person who receives a physical examination by medical authorities.

d. "Overpayment" means an amount paid to a beneficiary over and beyond the amount to which the beneficiary is entitled.

e. "Retirement" means official separation from one's Federal employment or position upon meeting at least the minimum requirement of years of creditable service and entitlement to retirement benefits under pertinent laws and regulations.

7 FAM 582.4 Retirement Applications

Initial applications for retirement and other benefits are submitted through the employee's personnel office. In the case of Department of State employees abroad, the Foreign Service post's administrative office will lend proper assistance. Only after annuitants have begun to receive payments should the post's requests for assistance be directed to the Department (CA/OCS/CCS). For additional information, see also 3 FAM 675 .

7 FAM 582.5 Medical Examinations

When a medical examination is required for an applicant or annuitant, the post will be informed by OPM, which will send a letter and a blank examination form to the post. The post takes the following action:

a. The post arranges promptly for the examination by a physician who is believed to be reliable and competent and informs the examinee of the time and place of the appointment.

NOTE: The letter requesting the examination specifies that the examining physician should include the bill for services rendered with the report of the examination and that OPM will send a check in payment for the amount billed. However, if there is a full-time, salaried medical officer of the United States (either a member of the armed forces, Public Health Service, or physician serving in a civilian capacity) on duty in reasonable proximity to the post, and whose services are available for the purpose, the examination is to be conducted by that physician without cost to the Government or the employee concerned.

b. The post returns the completed examination forms to: Compensation Group, Retirement and Insurance Programs, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, DC 20415. Examination results should be returned promptly.

7 FAM 582.6 Other Services

Special instructions, as required, will accompany any request by OPM for a service other than arranging for a medical examination. For information on collection of overpayments, see section 7 FAM 504.2 e.

7 FAM 582.7 Nonperformance of Service

As soon as it becomes apparent that a requested service cannot be performed within a reasonable time, the consular officer reports the facts and identifying data to OPM in a memorandum sent by airmail in an envelope bearing only the address given in section 7 FAM 582.5 b.

7 FAM 582.8 Inquiries About Benefits

At times annuitants may receive changes in benefit amounts without complete explanations from OPM. When this happens:

a. Posts should instruct annuitants who inquire about benefits or seek information about their cases to send their inquiries by international mail to: Compensation Group, Retirement and Insurance Programs, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, DC 20415.

b. Posts may assist by sending inquiries by telegram to RUEVDEE/ OPM/WASH DC--CAP: OPM for Compensation Group (see also section 7 FAM 530). OPM cannot respond to posts telegraphically, and written responses may be difficult to obtain. The Department (CA/OCS/CCS) should be made co-addressee, should its assistance be necessary.

7 FAM 582.9 Expenditures

Ordinarily, no consular expenditures are authorized by OPM.

7 FAM 583 RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD (RRB)

7 FAM 583.1 Introduction

The Railroad Retirement Board manages the retirement, survivor, unemployment, and illness benefit programs established by law for this Nation's railroad workers and their dependents. Annuities are paid to railroad employees with at least 10 years of service who retire because of age or disability. Annuities also are paid to surviving spouses, children, or parents of deceased employees when certain requirements are met. These benefits are coordinated with Social Security benefit programs and Medicare health insurance.

7 FAM 583.2 Authority

The Railroad Retirement Board was established by the Railroad Retirement Act of 1935, approved on August 29, 1935 (49 Stat. 967, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 215-228). Its current authority derives from the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974, approved on October 16, 1974 (88 Stat. 1305, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 231-231v), and from the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, approved on June 25, 1938 (52 Stat. 1094, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 351-368). The Board administers benefits under the Railroad Retirement Acts, Railroad Unemployment Act, Health Insurance for the Aging Act (see section 7 FAM 520), the Milwaukee Railroad Restructuring Act (93 Stat. 736; 45 U.S.C. 901-922), and the Regional Rail Reorganization Act of 1973, approved on January 2, 1974 (87 Stat. 987; 45 U.S.C. 701-794).

7 FAM 583.3 Definitions

In addition to definitions given in sections 7 FAM 503 and 7 FAM 582.3 , the following definitions pertain to railroad retirement benefits work:

- a. "Annuity" means a monthly sum which is payable on the first day of each month for the accrual during the preceding month.
- b. "Employer" means any express company, sleeping car company, and carrier by railroad (subject to Part I of the Interstate Commerce Act); or any company directly or indirectly owned or controlled by one or more such employers. For additional information, see the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C. 231-231v).
- c. "Railroad employee" means any person in the service, for compensation, of one or more of the Nation's railroad "employers" (see section 7 FAM 583.1), including an officer of such employer.

7 FAM 583.4 Investigation Questionnaire

- a. Once every 3 years, about June, the Railroad Retirement Board forwards to posts abroad preaddressed questionnaires enclosed in window envelopes. These must be mailed by each recipient post to the beneficiaries within its district. The questionnaire states that within 10 days a beneficiary shall return the executed form by international airmail directly to: Railroad Retirement Board, Bureau of Retirement Claims, 844 Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

b. If a completed questionnaire is not received by the Railroad Retirement Board within a reasonable time, that agency sends another questionnaire, marked "Second Request," to the post, which forwards it to the beneficiary. If the second questionnaire is not returned within the time allowed, the Railroad Retirement Board automatically suspends payments and may ask the post to conduct an investigation.

c. The cost of postage for mailing the triennial investigation questionnaires is charged to the post's regular Salaries and Expenses allotment. The Department has arranged with the Railroad Retirement Board for a lump-sum reimbursement of these costs.

7 FAM 583.5 Medical Examinations

When the Railroad Retirement Board requires one of its beneficiaries to undergo a medical examination, the Board informs the post by letter, enclosing a blank examination form. The post arranges for the examination by a physician believed to be reliable and competent and notifies the beneficiary of the time and place to appear for the examination. The post promptly returns the completed forms in a plain envelope addressed to the Railroad Retirement Board, 844 Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611. The envelope may be included with other pouch mail but should not mention the Department of State or its offices abroad.

7 FAM 583.5-1 Cost of Physical Examination

The maximum amount payable for a physical examination is specified in the letter requesting the service. The post makes the payment and includes the amount in the regular monthly account, as required by 4 FAM 335 .

7 FAM 583.5-2 Expenditures

No expenses are to be incurred or made in connection with services for the Railroad Retirement Board without prior authorization.

7 FAM 583.6 Other Services

7 FAM 583.6-1 Inquiries About Benefits

A person who inquires about initiating a claim for benefits, or a beneficiary who seeks information about a case, is instructed to send a letter of inquiry containing all pertinent facts and identifying data directly to the address provided in section 7 FAM 583.1 a and 7 FAM 583.4 a through the international mails.

7 FAM 583.6-2 Nonperformance of Service

If for any reason a post finds it impossible to perform a requested service, the pertinent facts and identifying data are to be reported by memorandum to the Railroad Retirement Board. The report should be sent in an envelope bearing only the address of the Railroad Retirement Board. Such action is taken only when it becomes apparent that the service cannot be performed within 60 days.

7 FAM 583.6-3 Medicare

An amendment to the Railroad Retirement Act provides that benefits under Plan A of Medicare (hospital benefits only) will be paid to RRB beneficiaries living in Canada, but not elsewhere abroad. For additional information on Medicare, see section 7 FAM 540 .

7 FAM 584 U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (USPHS)

7 FAM 584.1 Introduction

The Public Health Service was created by an Act of July 16, 1798 (ch. 77, 1 Stat. 605), which authorized hospitals for the care of U.S. merchant seamen. Later laws vastly extended its activities.

7 FAM 584.2 Authority

The Public Health Service Act of July 1, 1944 (58 Stat. 682; 42 U.S.C. 201) consolidated and amended existing legislation on the Public Health Service. More recent laws have expanded its services, as have major organizational changes within the Federal Government. The USPHS relies on consular officers overseas primarily for information on disease occurrence and control.

7 FAM 584.3 Definitions

In addition to terms defined in section 7 FAM 503 , the following terms are commonly used in consular functions performed for USPHS:

- a. "Disease" means an illness causing the impairment of a person's normal state of health of body and/or mind.
- b. "Epidemic" means the outbreak of a disease, or sudden rapid spreading or development of a disease, usually affecting many persons at once, that is, highly contagious.
- c. "Infection" means the process of contamination with a disease-producing substance, such as germs, viruses, or bacteria. It may also mean the contaminating agent itself.
- d. "Infected person" means a person who has become contaminated with a disease-producing substance.
- e. "Nonquarantinable" means having a contagious disease not so serious as to require detention or isolation from others.
- f. "Quarantinable" means having a highly contagious, serious disease, which requires isolation from others to prevent its spread, or a disease which is so virulent that those who are infected with it must be quarantined.

7 FAM 584.4 Reports on Quarantinable and Nonquarantinable Diseases

Consular officers are requested by USPHS to report on the occurrence of disease abroad.

- a. The consular officer reports on the first confirmed case(s) or outbreak(s) of a quarantinable disease (such as yellow fever, cholera, plague--either human or rodent), any suspected case of smallpox, and any outbreak of infections, communicable, or unusual diseases occurring within the consular district. Reports are submitted by telegram to the Division of Quarantine, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333 (use TAGS:CFED, and designate the telegrams as Limited Official Use).
- b. The reports should include the name of the specific disease, date of occurrence of the first case(s), number of persons affected, geographic location of the case(s), number of persons affected in the geographic location of the case or outbreak, results of laboratory studies (include the name of the laboratory), and quarantine action taken by local health authorities. In the case of quarantinable diseases, indicate if international seaports or airports within the consular district are specifically included in or excluded from the infected area.

7 FAM 584.5 Reports on Suspected Existence of Quarantinable Diseases

The consular officer reports also on the suspected existence, within the consular district, of yellow fever, cholera, or plague, as distinguished from the actual and confirmed presence of a quarantinable disease, by telegram to the Division of Quarantine, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333 (use TAGS:CFED, and designate the telegrams as LIMITED OFFICIAL USE).

7 FAM 584.6 Tuberculosis Notification and Venereal Disease Reports

a. The Centers for Disease Control (USPHS/CDC) sends tuberculosis notifications pertaining to residents returning to the consular district who were under treatment for tuberculosis while in the United States directly to appropriate local public health authorities in the consular districts.

b. The USPHS/CDC also sends directly to the appropriate local public health authorities in the consular districts venereal disease epidemiological reports pertaining to returning residents or visitors to the consular districts who were exposed to syphilis or gonorrhea diagnosed in the United States. A venereal disease epidemiological report includes instructions for the local authorities concerning local investigations and requests return of the completed report to the Division of Quarantine, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333.

7 FAM 584.7 Followup Reports

Telegraphic reports referred to in sections 7 FAM 584.4 and 7 FAM 584.5 should be confirmed at once by memorandum to the Division of Quarantine, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333. Confirming memoranda, as well as subsequent progress reports on the case(s) or outbreak(s), are to be submitted by airmail. No mention of the Department of State is to be made on the envelope.

7 FAM 584.8 Additional Reports

The consular officer also should report the following situations by memorandum to the Division of Quarantine, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333 (using TAGS:CFED):

a. The presence of any case of an imported quarantinable disease aboard a vessel or aircraft arriving within the consular district. Include the itinerary of the infected individual(s) and the vessel for the 14 days preceding the arrival, date of onset of the disease, results of laboratory studies, and quarantine actions taken by health authorities.

b. Changes in quarantine requirements (additions or deletions) imposed by health authorities on passengers, vessels, or aircraft arriving from ports in the United States.

7 FAM 585 THROUGH 589 UNASSIGNED